Tatyana Sumner

7201T – Fall 2012

WIKI – 5 Assignment

Fuchs, L.S., Fuchs, D., & Karns, K. (2001). Enhancing kindergartners’ mathematical development: Effects of peer-assisted learning strategies. *The Elementary School Journal*. 101(5), 495-510.

This study demonstrates the effect of peer-assisted learning strategies (PALS) on kindergarten students’ achievement in mathematics. This is an expansion of the research on implementing group learning strategies in mathematics. Researchers recruited teachers to implement PALS program with the standard curriculum to then further observe and compare achievements of those students with those learning without PALS program. The researchers observed that teachers were able to implement PALS program on their own in a classroom with different degrees of accuracy. This however had no implication on the students’ achievement results, since they have observed increase in students’ scores in all participating classrooms, especially in students with medium initial achievement status.

Kroeger, S. D., & Kouche, B. (2006). Using peer-assisted learning strategies to increase response to intervention in inclusive middle math settings. *Council for Exceptional Children.* 38(5), 6-13.

This article outlines the experience of a middle school math teacher with implementing peer-assisted learning strategies (PALS) into her classroom. The need for intervention came from Kouche’s realization that many students had poor attitudes toward mathematics and therefore were not putting a lot of effort into learning. She adapted the existing PALS program that exists for elementary and secondary education only for her students. The article details the process, which lead to students working together in a peer-setting and helping each other through complex mathematic curriculum. The authors observed that the engagement and the positive attitude toward math has increased dramatically, making the PALS a successful strategy to employ in the diverse classroom.

Norfleet James, A. (2007). Gender differences and the teaching of mathematics. *Inquiry*. 12(1), 14-25.

The article by Abigail Norfleet James presents a background to gender differences in mathematics and English learning. She offers a deeper look into the alleged gap in gender by providing data from the National Association for Education Progress (NAEP) The results display that when it comes to simple mathematic functions there is no difference in mathematic ability between boys and girls, however with more difficult operations and problems, boys outscore girls. Norfleet James provides various examples of cognitive differences that have been researched and accepted by the society and academics, yet she also points out that whether it is true or not, simple belief in a hindering stereotype affects women’s performance abilities. The author goes further and offers specific strategies for the teachers to follow, including creating collaborative, group/pair exercises.

Sadker, D., & Zittleman, K. (2005) Gender bias lives, for both sexes. *Education Digest.* 70(8), 27-30

This article discusses gender bias and expectations for both boys and girls, highlighting expectations for each gender and how these are reinforced. The topic is illustrated in the article with summaries and examples of educators and classmates, as well as the students themselves, contributing to gender expectations and stereotypes. The authors include examples of failed single-gender education experiments and possible detriments from continuing such gender-isolating attempts at helping students develop.

Tournaki, N., & Criscitiello, E. (2003). Using peer tutoring as a successful part of behavior management. *Teaching Exceptional Children.* 36(2), 22-29

The article describes the benefits of peer-tutoring strategies in adjusting behavior problems. By engaging students with disabilities or behavior problems in a role that bares responsibility of a tutor allows them to gain more self-esteem and gives them a purposeful and prestigious status for that time, which can lead to more positive behavior. It outlines their strengths instead of shortcomings and engages them in a positive activity. In the case of the experiment in the article, in addition to behavior, peer tutoring has also increased the students’ writing skills.